

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 17817 01 OF 02 092029Z

73

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

ACDA-05 EA-06 OMB-01 SAM-01 /072 W

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R 091840Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1103

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 17817/01

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, FR, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH SOCIALIST PARTY HEAD

FRANCOIS MITTERRAND

SUMMARY. RETURNING MY JANUARY LUNCHEON INVITATION, SOCIALIST PARTY FIRST SECRETARY FRANCOIS MITTERRAND INVITED MYSELF, THE DCM AND TWO EMBASSY OFFICERS TO LUNCH JULY 8. MITTERRAND WAS FRIENDLY, ARTICULATE, CANDID AND WELL INFORMED. OUR CONVERSATION WAS TIGHTLY FOCUSED ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS; MITTERRAND DISCUSSED HIS APRIL 23 - 28 TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION AT LENGTH. THE SOVIETS SEEM TO HAVE CONVINCED HIM THAT THEY ARE SINCERE ABOUT DETENTE; THEY CONTINUE TO BE OBSESSED BY THEIR FEARS OF A RESURGENT GERMANY; THEY SAID THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER IS A MAN WHO CAN BE TRUSTED; AND THEY CONVINCED HIM THAT THEY BELIEVE THE US HAS A SINCERE COMMITMENT TO DETENTE. MITTERRAND'S CRITICISMS OF THE US WERE, AS THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN HIS PRIVATE SESSIONS WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS, CONSTRUCTIVE. HE FEELS THAT BY REFUSING TO DISASSOCIATE OURSELVES FROM WHAT HE CALLED RIGHT-WING GOVERNMENTS, WE RUN THE RISK OF REPEATING THE PORTUGUESE EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE AND OFTEN. MITTERRAND  
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PAGE 02 PARIS 17817 01 OF 02 092029Z

IS PLANNING TO GO TO THE US AND HOPES TO BE RECEIVED AT

THE HIGHEST LEVELS; I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD MAINTAIN A CONSTRUCTIVE AND HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE WITH HIM. END SUMMARY.

1. MITTERRAND WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SPECIAL ASSISTANT, GERARD JAQUET; ROBERT PONTILLON, SOCIALIST PARTY SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS; AND LIONEL JOSPIN, THE PS SECRETARY FOR UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES. HE SEEMED EAGER TO DISCUSS HIS SOVIET TRIP AND THE EFFORTS OF HIS SOVIET INTERLOCUTORS TO CONVINCE HIM OF THE SOVIET UNION'S DEVOTION TO DETENTE. ARGUING THAT THE CURRENT GENERATION OF SOVIET LEADERS HAD GONE THROUGH WORLD WAR TWO AND HAD BEEN TERRIBLY MARKED BY THE MILLION OF RUSSIAN CASUALTIES, MITTERRAND ENDORSED THE SINCERITY OF THE SOVIET POSITION.

2. I ASKED MITTERRAND HOW HE FELT THIS COMMITMENT TO DETENTE SQUARED WITH SOVIET DECISIONS TO INCREASE MILITARY SPENDING AND BUILD UP THEIR TROOPS. MITTERRAND ANSWERED THAT HE HAD FOUND THE SOVIET LEADERS TO BE "TRAUMATIZED" BY THE FEAR OF CHINESE MILITARY AGGRESSION AND BY THE POSSIBILITY THAT A RESURGENT GERMANY WOULD POSE A SERIOUS MILITARY THREAT TO THE SOVIET UNION. IN MITTERRAND'S VIEW THIS EXPLAINS INCREASING SOVIET MILITARY SPENDING. BUILDING ON THIS THEME OF SOVIET FEARS OF THE PRC, MITTERRAND POINTED TO THE SOVIET IMPRESSION THAT AN ECONOMICALLY-UNITED EUROPE WILL NECESSARILY ALIGN ITSELF WITH PRC ECONOMIC POLICY. WHILE HIS OWN STAFF SCOFFED AT BOTH THE NOTION AND THE REALITY OF SOVIET BELIEF IN IT, MITTERRAND SEEMED TO TAKE THE POINT SERIOUSLY.

3. IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS ABOUT US - SOVIET BILATERAL RELATIONS, MITTERRAND SAID THAT SOVIET LEADERS HAD TOLD HIM THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS THE ONE WESTERN LEADER "WHO HAD NEVER LIED TO THEM." HE WENT ON TO NOTE THE SOVIET BELIEF THAT NOT ONLY COULD THE SECRETARY BE TRUSTED AS A NEGOTIATOR BUT THAT HE SINCERELY SOUGHT WAYS OF IMPROVING DETENTE.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PARIS 17817 01 OF 02 092029Z

4. MITTERRAND HIMSELF SEEMED CONCERNED WITH FRG STRENGTH. HE TWICE RETURNED TO HIS PERCEPTION THAT A COMMON DEFENSE FOR EUROPE WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE AS LONG AS THE FRG CLINGS TO THE US. I RESPONDED THAT A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FRG AND THE US WAS ONE OF THE WAYS OF KEEPING AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION AWARE OF THE NEED FOR TROOPS IN EUROPE. WITHOUT THIS SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP THE AMERICAN PUBLIC MIGHT ONCE MORE FEEL THAT IT WAS BEING ASKED TO

CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEFENSE OF A GROUP OF WEAKER NATIONS  
UNWILLING TO DEVOTE SUBSTANTIAL PORTIONS OF GNP TO THEIR  
OWN DEFENSE.

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PAGE 01 PARIS 17817 02 OF 02 092052Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 17817/02

5. MITTERRAND WAS RESERVED ON PORTUGAL AND AT FIRST SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO DISCUSS IT. AS HE RELAXED DURING OUR LUCHEON, HE OFFERED THE INTERESTING COMMENT THAT THE REAL PORTUGUESE DILEMMA TODAY IS NOT A FUNCTION OF THE SOARES - CUNHAL QUARREL BUT IS IN FACT A CONTINUING DEBATE BETWEEN THE SUPPORTERS OF SALAZAR AND MORE PROGRESSIVE ELEMENTS. IN ANY CASE, MITTERRAND THOUGHT THAT INER-PARTY DEBATE IS ALMOST IRRELEVANT TO CURRENT PORTUGUESE PROBLEMS SINCE IT IS THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT WHICH HOLDS DECISION-MAKING POWER. HE SAID HE FEARED THAT PORTUGAL WOULD END UP WITH ANOTHER DICTATORSHIP, WITH BOTH SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS IN JAIL.

6. AFTER ASSURING US THAT HE AND HIS PARTY WERE INTERESTED FRIENDS OF THE US, MITTERRAND TOOK ISSUE WITH WHAT HE CALLED OUR POLICY OF RELYING ON THE SUPPORT OF DICTATORS AND THE RIGHT WING IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN OUR BASES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO EUROPE, HE SEEMED ANXIOUS TO CONVINCE US THAT WE COULD DO BETTER IN OUR ATTEMPTS TO KEEP OUR SPANISH BASES THAN

TO RELY ON THE SUCCESSION OF PRINCE JUAN CARLOS. IF  
THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO RELY ON AUTHORITARIAN  
GOVERNMENTS SUCH AS THOSE OF TURKEY, GREECE IN THE TIME  
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PAGE 02 PARIS 17817 02 OF 02 092052Z

OF THE COLONELS OR THE SALAZAR REGIME IN PORTUGAL, THERE  
WILL COME A TIME, MITTERRAND SAID, WHEN LIBERAL OR  
SOCIALIST FORCES WILL, FOR NATIONALISTIC REASONS, DEMAND  
AN END TO THE US PRESENCE IN THEIR COUNTRY. THIS,  
MITTERRAND FELT, WOULD BE WRONG SINCE HE ACCEPTS THE  
NEED FOR A CONTINUED US PRESENCE IN EUROPE. I RESPONDED  
THAT IF WE HAD MANIFESTED A PREFERENCE FOR OTHER FORMS OF GOVERNMENT  
OR PERSONS IN THESE COUNTRIES, MITTERRAND WOULD HIMSELF  
ACCUSE US OF INTERFERENCE IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS.  
HE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY, BUT DID NOT APPEAR CONVINCED.

7. MITTERRAND TOLD ME HE IS PLANNING TO GO TO THE US  
TO ACCEPT A SPEAKING INVITATION FROM THE COUNCIL ON  
FOREIGN RELATIONS OF NEW YORK. DURING THIS TRIP HE WOULD  
LIKE TO SEE THE SECRETARY AND, IF POSSIBLE, WOULD LIKE  
TO CALL ON PRESIDENT FORD. MITTERRAND'S STAFF HAS LET IT  
BE KNOWN THAT MITTERRAND COULD GO TO THE US IN EITHER  
THE PERIOD OCTOBER 6 - 12 OR OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 2;  
HE WILL CHOOSE ONE OF THESE DATES AS SOON AS WE CAN  
INDICATE TO HIM WHICH ONE MIGHT BE MORE CONVENIENT FROM  
THE POINT OF VIEW OF HIGH-LEVEL WASHINGTON CONTACTS.

8. COMMENT. ON THE BASIS OF TWO CONVERSATIONS WITH  
MITTERRAND, I HAVE THE FEELING THAT HE SINCERELY BELIEVES  
IN THE FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENT OF A CONTINUED AMERICAN  
SECURITY PRESENCE IN EUROPE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.  
HIS CRITICISM OF US POLICY, WHILE ESSENTIALLY NAIVE IN  
MANY ASPECTS, REFLECTS THIS BASIC OBJECTIVE. FOR THIS  
REASON, AND BECAUSE THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY IS  
BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT, I FEEL THAT THE  
SECRETARY WILL FIND IT USEFUL AND INTERESTING TO SEE  
MITTERRAND DURING HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES NEXT  
OCTOBER, AND THAT IT WOULD ALSO BE DESIRABLE FOR  
THE PRESIDENT TO SEE HIM.  
RUSH

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## Message Attributes

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